

# ABSTRACT

An animated virtual creature is generated on a display such as a television set, in order to simulate a pet or to facilitate user interface functions. In one embodiment, one or more signals corresponding to the program being watched are monitored. When certain events are detected based on this monitoring, the animated character is controlled in a manner that corresponds to the detected event. In another embodiment, the animated virtual creature responds to program selections made by a user in a program recommendation system.

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